To Fr. H + H.E. Fries from J.L.P.

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no. 15

MATERIALISM

IN ITS

RELATIONS TO MODERN CIVILIZATION.

AN ADDRESS

BEFORE THE

Eumenean and Philanthropic

SOCIETIES

OF

DAVIDSON COLLEGE,

NORTH CAROLINA,

DELIVERED IN THE PUBLIC HALL OF THE COLLEGE ON

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26, 1877,

BY

REV. T. D. WITHERSPOON, D. D.,

OF PETERSBURG, VA.

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NOTE.

In submitting this address to the public through the courtesy of the young gentlemen to whom it was spoken, and who have honored me by requesting a copy for publication, I beg leave to acknowledge my special indebtedness in its preparation to two valuable works, viz: "Religion as affected by Modern Materialism," by James Martineau, LL. D., of Manchester New College, London, and "The Sensualistic Philosophy of the Nineteenth Century Considered," by R. L. Dabney, D. D., LL. D., of Union Theol. Seminary, Va.

CORRESPONDENCE.

DAVIDSON COLLEGE, N. C.
October 20th, 1877.

DEAR SIR:—The Philanthropic Society has ordered me to request of you a copy of your address, delivered before the Literary Societies of Davidson College last June, in order that we may have it published. With the hope that you will comply with the request, I am, sir,

Very respectfully yours,
W. W. MOORE,
Agent Phil. Soc'y.

REV. T. D. WITHERSPOON, D. D., Petersburg, Va.

PETERSBURG, VA., November 12th, 1877.

DEAR SIR:—Deeply sensible of the imperfections of my address and yet profoundly impressed with the importance of the subject it discusses, I submit it to the Society through whose courtesy it was delivered, and only wish it was more worthy of the regard you are pleased to bestow upon it.

With my best wishes for the success of Davidson College and its Literary Societies, and my grateful acknowledgment of the honor you have conferred upon me,

I am, my dear sir,
Yours in sincere regard,
T. D. WITHERSPOON.

MR. W. W. MOORE,
Agent Phil. Society,
Davidson College, N. C.

CORRESPONDENCE.

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REV. T. D. WITHERSPOON, D. D., Baltimore, Md.

2.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., November 13th, 1877.

DEAR SIR:—Deeply sensible of the imperfections of my address and yet profoundly impressed with the importance of the subject it discusses, I submit it to the Society whose courtesy it was delivered, and only wish it was more worthy of the regard you are pleased to bestow upon it.

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Yours in sincere regard,

T. D. WITHERSPOON.

MR. W. W. MOORE,

Agent Phil. Society,

Davidson College, N. C.

ADDRESS.

If the founder of the city of Philadelphia had suddenly re-appeared in the midst of the splendid carnival which so recently closed in that metropolis, it may be questioned which would have been the occasion of a greater surprise, William Penn in his Quaker garb, and with his staid demeanor to the gay and fashionable throngs that swept through the halls of the Exposition; or the scene of material splendor to the old colonist, as it broke for the first time upon his astonished vision.

With what admiration he would have looked upon colossal structures on every hand, in which iron and glass have through the triumph of modern art been wrought into forms of wondrous symmetry and beauty in marvelous combination of lightness and strength, and stored with the world's industries gathered from every clime. With what wonder he would have seen the touch of a single hand upon a single lever setting in motion whole acres of machinery, and awakening into energy thousands of distinct mechanisms, in each of which some old and tardy process of manufacture has been superseded by movements that to the rapidity of the lightning add the accuracy aud delicacy of the most skilled handicraft and most patient toil.

And when from the wonders of the Exposition he turned to contemplate the city which he had left with but a few hundred inhabitants, and, ascending one of the observatories of the park, looked down upon the splendid emporium of a half million inhabitants with its crowded thoroughfares and its courtly avenues, with its marble palaces and its granite wharves, 'with its stately churches and its splendid

charities, with its great network of interlacing railways and its lines of iron steamers independent of wind and tide. When he was made fully acquainted with all the mysteries of the telegraph, the steam engine, the signal bureau, and the printing press; he might well conceive, as all the features of our modern civilization were thus made to pass in review before him, and he contrasted the America of to-day with that upon which his eyes closed when he was gathered to his fathers a century and a half ago, that some superior race of beings had driven out the Anglo-Saxons whom he had settled on the banks of tne Schuylkill, even as they in his time were pressing back the Indians before the march of their advancing civilization.

But when the sturdy old yeoman with his severe disdain of that which is merely outward and material, and his just reverence for that which is inward and spiritual; with his unquestioning religious faith, and his incorruptible personal integrity, had looked a little more closely into this civilization, which in its material splendor had so dazzled his eye, he would, if I mistake not, discover beneath all the fair and fairy-like exterior, elements which would sober his patriotic pride, and give occasion for profoundest apprehension and alarm.

As the visitor to Argolis in the fabled days of Hercules, looking down upon that beautiful valley with its almost tropical luxuriance which enclosed the village and marshes of Lerna, would have found his vision of fertile fields and fragrant flowers, and ripening grain, marred by the traces of the direful hydra that infested and wasted it; so amidst this gorgeous civilization of ours, which like a tropical landscape opens before our view, one cannot look with the eye of the patriot, the philanthropist or the Christian without recognizing the presence of a many-headed monster—a serpent whose fang is as poisonous as the asp's, whose slimy trail is but too clearly to be traced on every hand.

Let us go down then into this valley of our modern civilization, not to malign its beauty or to disparage its fertility, not to crush a single flower or darken a single hue of all its loveliness, but to trace the hydra to his lair and then call mightily, if perchance some Hercules may be sent with his club and his Iolaus to dispatch the monster and set us free.

The monster to which I refer is *Materialism*, a system of belief which was not born of our modern civilization, having been taught in the school of Epicurus in almost identically its present form more than two thousand years ago, but which in these latter days has reappeared in modern philosophical dress, and having securely entrenched itself within the domain of the physical sciences, is beginning to invade every department of our social and intellectual life, and to threaten with demolition all that makes the beauty and glory of our civilization.

MATERIALISM, then, is the theme of the present address—not the crude materialism of the ancient sages, but materialism in its more highly wrought and elaborate forms, as it has become an acknowledged power in the world of letters, numbering amongst its votaries men whose names are highest upon the roll of scientific research and discovery in the present age.

And *first*, let us view it as it rears its head in our schools of philosophy.

Philosophic Materialism,—if indeed it be not a misnomer to apply the term philosophic to that which violates every true principle of philosophy—has for its great characteristic the entire negation of the subjective. Its fundamental principle is that nothing can be matter of philosophic reasoning which is not first matter of scientific knowledge. But that only is scientifically known which is capable of experimental proof. Now as we have, says the Materialist, no scientific tests to which we can subject those mental processes which are purely subjective, and by which their authentici-

ty can be established, it follows that all purely subjective processes must be discarded. The whole range of experience (in the philosophic sense of that word) must be limited to those phenomena which are in some way connected with sense-perception. Of the soul as a purely spiritual essence we know nothing. Mind indeed, we know, but not the mind of which the psychologist fondly dreams. The only mind known to us is a more subtle form of nerve matter residing in the brain. Thought is only a molecular function of this nerve matter. Emotion is only a delicate pulsation that thrills like an electric current along the tissues of this nerve system. That which distinguishes man from the brute is not that he possesses a spiritual nature, but that he has a higher molecular development, and therefore a more delicate sensibility to nerve impressions. But as all this intricate and complicated molecular action is purely physical, and subject like all other physical action to the great law of cause and effect, it follows that all idea of spontaneity in the will must be abandoned. All volitions fall under the reign of a physical necessity which is universal and inexorable. With freedom of volition, moral responsibility and obligation also disappear. All primary faiths and intuitive convictions being purely subjective, must be rejected. Consciousness, it is true, bears her clear and unmistakable testimony to the reality of that inner world of thought, volition, obligation; but consciousness is scouted from the stand as a discredited witness, because her testimony can not be substantiated by the exact methods of physical science. All metaphysics is pronounced unphilosophical —"a land of vain shadows and airy phantoms,—a visionary cloudland that may delight the imagination of the mystic, but which vanishes into nothing when touched by the wand of exact experimental science."

This, young gentlemen, is, in brief, the system of philosophy which we are called upon to accept as the expression

of the advanced thought of the age in which we live—a philosophy which denies the existence of a spirit in man because it cannot be resolved in the crucible of physical science, and will not accredit the existence of a God in heaven, because He will not reveal Himself through spectrum-analysis; which recognizes but one cause in the universe—blind unintelligent force, and but one effect—ceaseless and ever-varying motion; which for *mind* writes highly developed nerve-tissue, and for *conscience*, thoroughly educated animal instinct.

This is the philosophy which following closely in the wake of modern scientific progress, and gaining courage from the magnificent results of investigation in the physical world, as compared with the apparent barrenness of fruitage in the fields of metaphysical inquiry, assumes a dogmatism which is all the more dangerous because it pleads the authority of true science, while it affects "with a single stroke of its magisterial hand to sweep from the domain of the knowable all that is brightest and most beautiful in our thinking—all that is most glorious and god-like in the nature of man."

But if it were only in the domain of philosophy that we encountered Materialism, its consideration would not be a matter of so much moment. "Materialism," as one of our most eloquent writers has truly said, "sitting in the schools and speaking through the forms of philosophy is not much to be dreaded. It is too monstrous to be believed. It shocks our moral convictions and startles the pride of self love. We can safely leave it to the instinct of human scorn which resents as an insult such a libel upon our nature."

It is when Materialism steps forth from the secluded walks of philosophy and enters the domain of practical life that it becomes appalling. All history shows the intimate connection between the speculative opinions of a people and their practical life. The roots of a nation's character are in its

philosophy. The fruits will be found sooner or later to correspond.

Let us therefore trace the influence of materialism in our domestic, social and national life.

The chief glory of our modern civilization, and especially of that form of it to which we of the South were born, is found in the estimate which it places upon *personal culture* as compared with those accompaniments of art and adornment which constitute in a certain sense its material expression. We have been taught from our childhood that there is a majesty and glory in truth, honor, integrity, principle, piety, such as no art-culture can ever develop, and for the lack of which no material greatness can ever compensate. Recognizing ourselves as beings endowed with immortality, placed here under a divine commission for the purpose of expanding our faculties, ennobling our natures, and fitting ourselves for a higher and more glorious existence, surrounded on every hand by beings with the same heavenly origin and the same immortal destiny with ourselves—b ings who touch us at every point in the varied relations of life, who appeal to us through every generous impulse and rational motive that can operate upon us, to whom we sustain heaven-appointed relations of mutual dependence, sympathy and trust; whom we are to love loyally, serve faithfully, defend heroically because they were moulded by the same infinite hand, wear the same divine image, are bearers of the same fiduciary trusts, and look forward to the same heaven with ourselves; it is no wonder if, under such convictions as these, men have felt that truth and honor and principle are more than wealth and prestige and renown. It is no wonder that stirred by these higher springs of character, elevated above the range of the selfish and the sensual by considerations of God and eternity and heaven, men have striven to hold inviolate, whatever else might fall, personal integrity, social virtue and national honor.

Thus amidst the rugged mountains, within the deep valleys and upon the broad prairies of this Southern land, there may be found to-day, dwelling, many of them in rude hamlets, with no pretence to scientific knowledge and but limited advancement even in the industrial arts, the noblest race of men on whom the sun ever shone; men whose intellects have been expanded by daily study of God's revealed truth, the inspired text-book of their childhood, their manhood and their old age; men through whose rough exterior shines the majesty of a soul that holds high converse with eternal things; whose characters are as transparent as the pure streams that leap down from their native hills; upon whose chaste bosoms the wife leans her head as upon her snow-white and stainless pillow—about whose knees their children gather with a love all the more confiding that it wears a tinge of reverence; men who not only disdain a bribe, but scorn with a still more measureless disdain him who presumes to offer it; men who in time of peace strove to maintain the supremacy of the constitution, the integrity of the ballot, the purity of the judiciary and the inviolability of personal right; men who, when war came, in defence of liberty and home, threw their manly breasts as a living wall between their common country and the invading hosts, and for four years against appalling numbers, and amidst unparalleled hardships and self-denials, hurled back the stately columns of the enemy in disaster and dismay, wresting victories by any one of which Roman Legions or Grecian Phalanx would have been made immortal—until worn down by exhaustion, and wasted away by attrition against columns overwhelmingly massed and incessantly recruited, they surrendered at last, giving up not the principles for which they fought, but the bayonets that could no longer defend them; and with a higher heroism in the hour of sorrowful surrender than that which had been illustrated in the hour of greatest success, and with a self-mastery

that the conquerors have never had the magnanimity even to understand, they buried in a common grave all the high hopes that the conflict had awakened, and all the bitterness and animosities that had kindled in its path. Obedient to the same voice of Providence that had called them forth, they returned to their devastated homes to add to the heroism that had crowned them in the hour of victory and the higher heroism that had nerved them in the hour of defeat that highest heroism of all by which, silent amidst calumny and abuse and patient under despotic tyrrany and misrule, they have, amidst untold aggravations, maintained inviolate the fealty which they pledged in the hour of surrender, have "submitted themselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake," and have won the admiration of the world by the assiduity with which they have carried the discipline of war into the arts of peace.

These are the men whom our christian civilization is fitted to produce. This is the type of character to which it aspires, and towards which it unceasingly tends. Give full play to the moral and religious agencies which it employs, bring a whole people under the dominant influence of the principles it inculcates, the duties it enjoins, and the motives it inspires, and no metes or bounds can be fixed to the prosperity to which it may attain, the influence it may exert, and the renown it may achieve.

But now let the genius of Materialism enter, and with the first stroke of its wand it sweeps away all those high and ennobling influences which we have seen to spring from this view of man's birth. Instead of a heavenly origin and a fiduciary trust, we are told that man is but a waif, thrown upon the stage of action by the play of blind and unintelligent forces—that he is only a link in the endless chain of evolution, and when his brief course is run, is swept from the stage by the same remorseless, aimless, inexorable destiny under which he appeared. So far from being

the creature of a Heavenly Hand, and the partaker of a Heavenly Nature, he is at best but a highly-developed brute. Reason is only another name for educated animal instinct. Conscience is only "the resultant of those instinctive fears and satisfactions which originally dwelt in the ancestral ape." All notions of right and wrong are "the result of the conditions under which we have been reared, and if those conditions had been different, our notions of right and wrong would have been different, so that as we see in the case of bees, family murder would be a sacred duty, and a mother be fulfilling her highest moral and social obligation in taking the life of her helpless babe."

How disastrous to all true nobility of character and elevation of sentiment must be such a view of man's origin and nature as this. If it be true that the boy who is taught from his childhood that the blood which flows in his veins is the blood of warriors and of kings, who traces his lineage through generations of men foremost in peace and in war, will, by the inspiration of an illustrious ancestry, be nerved to knightly and heroic deeds, must it not equally be true that, as another has said, "the man who regards himself as by physiological evolution the great grandson of an oyster, will, with hereditary instinct, seek a comfortable sandbank in some shallow cove of life and there selfishly fatten in his shell for the fishery of death."

Not less humiliating is the view of man's destiny which Materialism presents. If the soul is to be dissipated into thin air, or remanded into nothingness by the dissolution of the material frame,—if man's destiny is, as the High Priest of Materialism tells us, "to melt away like a thin and vapory cloud, into the infinite azure of the past,"—if, when these eyes that now beam with intelligence are closed at the touch of death, they close never to open again to the beauties either of this world or of another,—if, when these hearts that now beat high and warm grow still and pulse-

less, they are nevermore to throb in unison with aught that is holy, or generous, or true; if there is no future state of conscious existence in which the toils and sacrifices of this present life shall be compensated, in which its wrongs shall be redressed, and its inequalities adjusted; if there is no heaven beyond the grave for the good, and no hell for the wicked, then has man no end to subserve commensurate with the scale on which his being is projected; no equivalent for the self-renunciation to which his circumstances in life challenge him, and no motives to the culture of his being in conformity with the dictates of reason and conscience, which can compete with the selfish and sordid pleadings of the passions and appetites of the present hour, and the Epicurean of to-day will find his highest expression of wisdom in the words of the Epicurean of old, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."

But that in which the baleful influence of Materialism in social life most conspicuously appears, is in the view which it presents of the natural law of human life, as expressed in that threadbare but significant phrase, the "*survival of the fittest.*"

The flower of our civilization we have seen to be personal culture – and of this flower every twig and root and stem is precious—every leaf, and germ, and bud is beautiful, but that which makes its graceful corolla, that into which it unfolds as its highest and most perfect development is the spirit of self-negation by which "every man looks not on his own things but also on the things of others," by which "the strong support the weak," by which men "bear one another's burdens,"—manhood in its strength becoming the supporter of infancy in its helplessness, and youth in its vigor becoming the maintenance of old age in its decrepitude and decay. This self-negation lies at the basis of all social order, of all constitutional freedom, of all sound and wholesome administration of law. It roots itself in those intimate relations

of mutual interdependence and sympathy which hold men together in a common weal. It flowers in those broad philanthropies and noble charities which are peculiar to our christian civilization, in which the tenderness of human sympathy, the liberality of munificent wealth, and the discoveries and appliances of advanced science are all brought to bear for the relief of the suffering, the rescue of the perishing, the supply of the needy, the cure of the sick, the restoration of the erring, the healing of all disorder, and the righting of all wrong. Let this feature of our civilization be fully realized and out of the abundance of the rich the necessities of the honest poor would be freely supplied; the arm of the strong would be the sure defense of the weak; war would cease; famine would be abated; pestilence would be robbed of half its horrors. There would be no form of suffering that should not evoke a healthful sympathy, and no cry for help that should not awaken a generous response.

But listen a moment to the materialistic philosopher. The present high estate to which the race has attained, is directly to be traced to a competitive contest carried on through the ages, in which the strong has antagonised the weak and has triumphed over it.

The great law of nature, he tells us, is not that the strong shall support the weak, but shall trample it down, or thrust it aside in the race for development. Only the fittest deserve to survive. The weak must go to the wall—the feeblest elements must be eliminated. The halt and the maimed and the blind must be left by the wayside. They are dead weights that retard in the race of human progress. Those instincts of self-negation, beautiful as they are, are in the very face of the true law of evolution and they must be ignored. The tender care of a mother for a delicate and suffering child is against the ordering of nature which looks only to the survival of the hardy and the strong. Our hospitals for incurable disease, our infirmaries for the treat-

ment of hereditary disorders, all the refinements of medical and surgical science, the medical treatment and vaccination of the poor at the public expense,—all these are barriers improperly thrown in the way of that great process of elimination by which nature disentangles herself from alliances with weakness and imperfection, and lightens herself for the goal of perfection towards which she strives.

We have it, therefore, not indistinctly hinted from highest scientific authorities, that our peace-congresses ought to be abolished, and the nations left to that arbitrament of the sword by which nature designs that a hardier race and a stronger civilization shall outmaster and supplant weaker ones; that for the same reason famines and pestilences should be left without charitable relief from abroad to fulfil their mission of reducing superfluous populations, especially as the poorer classes and those of more delicate physical organizations are the ones who are generally swept away by these plagues.

It requires but a moment's thought to discover the baleful influence which must be exerted by such principles as these. They lay their deadening weight upon all the nobler motives and more generous impulses of our nature. They ring the death-knell of all true charity. They are utterly subversive of all our domestic and social institutions. They involve, if accepted, the eradication of all that is gentle and kindly, all that is tender and loving in the relations of life.

But in this hurried glance let us pass now in the last place to consider Materialism in the domain of religion.

From what we have already seen it might indeed seem superfluous to speak of religion in connection with Materialism, which admits like the ancient Sadducee "neither angel nor spirit" which wants both the great terms necessary to religion, "God and the human soul," and which might well assert its mission to be like that of Epicurus "to rid the world of its gods."

But strange as the statement may appear, the advocates of Materialism claim that they have still left man ground for religion. The man of science has indeed no need for the belief in a personal God. Given as he tells us, that which we have, an infinite number of infinitesimal and eternally existent molecules or atoms, drawn towards one another by occult laws of affinity, with infinite space through which to roam, and infinite time in which to perfect courses of natural selection and genetic evolution, and there is not a phenomenon known to science which cannot be explained.

Whilst by the old Grecian Drama a god is not to be introduced unless there is a knot worthy for a god to untie, yet if the imagination of the unscientific man clamors for the existence of a personal God; if his emotional nature has not yet been educated up to the point at which it can dispense with these religious props which belong to the earlier and more barbarous years of the race; if he cannot be content to worship at the altars of Materialism that atomic deity which sits upon the throne of the universe, or that subtle, all-pervading, but unintelligent force, whose energy awakens all things into being, then by all means in this infancy of his understanding, let him believe in this personal God, and let him worship Him to his heart's content: only let the agreement be distinctly upon these two conditions, *first*, that the votaries of a personal Divinity shall not claim either that their conceptions of this personal being, or the notions which enter into His worship have any foundation, in reason. They are only blind unintelligent instincts. The God whom the christian worships is a God of whom he knows nothing, however reverently and tenderly he feels towards Him. So long therefore as he confesses his devotion to be only of the nature of irrational impulse, all is well. But if he presumes to find a foundation in reason for his belief in God, or an answer in the understanding to his emotions of love, gratitude, reverence and adoration, he is

not to be tolerated for a moment. And *second*, that this Being unknown to reason shall be conceded to exist, if He exist at all, in those recesses of infinity which lie beyond the utmost bound of the universe as known to us. For has not science swept this universe with its telescope and its spectroscope, and found everywhere the undisputed reign of blind unintelligent force? Has it not found such impregnable, unvarying physical law as utterly excludes the action of an Infinite Spirit? Whatever, therefore, may lie beyond the boundary of the known, within this boundary there is no room for Providence, no possibility of miracle, no place for prayer. If therefore our God should pity us in our sorrow and seek to rescue us in our peril, there is between Him and us the great impassable barrier of law, with the invariability of which he cannot tamper, the hard, conscienceless, remorseless flow of which he cannot check without disturbing all the harmony of the spheres, and throwing universal nature into disorder and dismay.

And thus this exiled Father of our spirits, sitting outside of the universe He has made, sees the tear gather upon the cheek of his child which he is powerless to wipe away; would fain cover his head with His infinite hand in the hour of peril and alarm, but dare not, and so, able it may be to pity, but powerless to save, looks on in His self-inflicted impotence, whilst we make the best that we can of "a simply molecular universe, a pessimist world, and an unappeasable battle of life'"

This, young gentlemen is, in brief, that system of Materialism whose advocates are found in the highest walks of literature and science to-day, and which is boldly put forward by them as the "new faith," before which all our old faiths, as things effete and worn out, are to disappear.

Against this system I enter my solemn protest to-day. As one who stands upon the dyke which protects fair cultivated fields from the encroachment of devastating floods,

and detects the oozing of the tiny drops which are heralds of the incipient crevasse, so I stand to-day between a civilization the fairest on which the sun ever shone, and a turbid, encroaching flood whose waters are dark as Erebus, and deadly as the fabled vapors of the Asphaltic Sea. Between this civilization and the desolating flood, the great bulwark under God is that spiritualistic philosophy which Materialism seeks to undermine.

I protest against Materialism, because of the utter fallacy of the philosophic principles upon which it professes to rest. By what strange canon of the understanding, pray, do these philosophers place consciousness on the witness stand, take her testimony and accredit it as veracious, so long as she testifies to her knowledge of that which transpires in the material world without; but when she gives as clear and explicit testimony to her knowledge of the subjective world of thought and spirit, repudiate her authority, impugn her veracity and, as a discredited witness, hoot her away. If her testimony is valid as to the objective, it must be still more so as to the subjective, which is her proper sphere. If, as these philosophers claim, all knowledge is simply of the phenomenal, and from material phenomena we are necessitated to infer material substance, then by the very same law, from spiritual phenomena we are compelled to infer spiritual substance, and the whole fabric of Materialism goes to the ground.

I protest again, because of the dishonor which this system puts upon human nature. It degrades man to the level of the brute. It profanes all the sanctities of his nature. It pollutes all the fountains of his life. My nature resents, with an infinite scorn, such an insult to its dignity and such a libel upon its birth.

I protest again because of the coarse utilitarianism which it engenders. It exalts the material above the spiritual, makes more of the body than of the soul, and in its rude

march of labor-saving, wealth-accumulating, resource-developing progress, tramples under foot everything which cannot be immediately applied to the practical business of life. Material prosperity is its highest goal. Civilization is estimated by the length of a nation's railways, the extent of its commerce and manufactures, and the number of its men bearing arms, and thus, under the rough granite of a simply material civilization, is buried all that is most beautiful in art, most true in philosophy, and most sacred in religious faith.

I protest against it because of the wrecks with which its historic pathway is strewn. Whenever a nation has become infected with this philosophy, it has yielded to disintegration and decay.

Ancient Assyria in the time of her greatest splendor seemed possessed of a civilization that would never decay. But intoxicated with her wealth, her numbers, her resources, she worshipped at the shrine of Materialism, and soon all private virtue had decayed, all true heroism and nobility of character had evaporated, and a people of higher intellectual culture and hardier virtue laid her in the dust.

Greece, so long as she remained under the dominant influence of those systems of philosophy which taught the personality of the gods and the spirituality of the men who worshipped them, wielded resistless empire in the world of nations and the world of thought. But the day came when the Epicurean philosophy was supreme and then as has been plaintively said, "for lack of light and for want of hope, everything of beauty in the literature of Greece, everything of grace in its art, all of truth in its philosophy, all of heroism in its character withered and vanished away."

It was when honeycombed by this materialistic philosophy that the vast fabric of the Roman empire crumbled to pieces, when as the same writer has said, "Art expired, letters were lost, and for a thousand years the genius of

barbarism brooded over the melancholy ruin." It was under the baleful influence of materialism that the awful drama of the French Revolution was enacted. Introduce it here, and it will not be long until all civil and social order will be upheaved, and anarchy and sedition run riot in blood.

I protest finally because of that false antagonism in which it arrays science and religion.

In the beautiful valley of Lauterbrunnen in Switzerland is a celebrated cataract known as the *Staubbach* or *Dust Fall*, because of the gentleness of motion with which its waters descend. A little stream leaps over a precipice of more than a thousand feet, and of such conformation that as you look up from the valley at the base the tiny rivulet seems to be leaping out of the very bosom of the skies. The current is broken into spray by the chafing of the rocks at the point from which it makes the leap, and, its motion being retarded by the air of the valley into which its descends, it falls in so ethereal a mist that the light winds of the summer lift it and bear it like a thin veil hither and thither over the beautiful prairie that lies at the base, and thus it was that during the month of August when I visited it, the rest of the valley was parched and dry, but at the base of the cataract a little circle of several acres in extent had its grass still as green and its flowers as fragrant as in the early spring. And when I remarked upon the beneficence and beauty of so gentle and heavenlike an agency, my guide interrupted me by saying that I should see it in the winter-time, for then, not only was the whole surface of the prairie covered with the filmy ice of the freezing vapor, but just beneath the base of the cataract great colonnades of ice shot upward clinging to the face of the precipice, increasing daily in volume and in height, until at length they looked as if they would climb to the very brink of the precipice and freeze out the current at its source.

True science is to the truth of God what the summer winds of Lauterbrunnen are to the waters of the cascade. Taking this truth, one at its source like the current of the Staubbach, yet broken in its descent to us into myriad forms that it may adapt itself to human needs, it receives it with reverent acknowledgment of its heavenly origin and authority, and wafts it in ever-widening circles to beautify and bless.

False science is like the icy breath of winter, not only covering over with its chilling breath that which is fair and beautiful about it, but building the cold frost-work of its heartless materialism—beautiful it is true, but deadly as it is fair—pushing upward its imagined reign of impersonal force, as though it would lock up the fountains of infinite love and compassion at their very source.

It is only against this science falsely so called that religion maintains and must ever maintain a deadly antagonism. Between true science and true religion there cannot be antagonism; but it becomes the votaries of this false science to pause and consider what must be the issue of any antagonism between it and religion. If that dark day should ever come, when science shall stand on one side and religion on the other, and we must either renounce our religion or our science, then by the great law of the "survival of the fittest," science must go to the wall, for we can live without science, but we cannot live without religion. Within that region where man's real necessities are found he has wants which science cannot meet, and woes which science cannot heal. When the soul is pressed down by the burden of conscious guilt, or startled into terror by the prevision of the judgment seat, what lever has science in all the range of her mechanics with which to lift off the ponderous load that is crushing the very life from the heart—or what re-agent in all her retorts that will restore to the soul its lost tranquility and peace? When shadows from the sepulchre steal across

the threshold of my dwelling, and sorrow sits like the poet's raven brooding amidst the desolations of my heart, what balm has science in all her laboratories to lay upon my bleeding spirit? What power has she to charm away the ominous voice that tortures me with its merciless "nevermore"? And when I feel the pressure of death's cold hand upon me, and my trembling spirit looks out upon the dread unknown which it must so soon traverse, what light has science of Electron or Calcium, which will penetrate the darkness of the grave, and light up the regions of immortality that lie beyond. Nay, in all her generalizations, and under all her inductions, she has no truth to compare with the "truth as it is in Jesus"—no knowledge to compare with the knowledge of the glory of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ.

If, therefore, I must make the choice, then perish forever all the treasures of science which I have loved so well—all the gold from the hidden mines of truth, where for ages her sons have nobly toiled—all the priceless pearls she has brought up from the bosom of the deep sea. Give me that one pearl which is of great price, God's precious, glorious Gospel, and with that fondly pressed to my heart, the smile of heaven upon my pathway, and the hope of immortality kindling within my soul, I shall be richer than he who possesses "all the gold of science and all the rubies of philosophy."

But why should I speak thus, since all truth is one, even as God is one? Between the revelations of Himself in His works and in His Word, there cannot possibly be any contradiction. Between the dogmas of theologians and the hypotheses of men of science, there may be antagonism for a time, but even this is unnatural and cannot long be maintained. The light of science was first kindled at the altars of religion. Its infancy was nurtured beneath the shadows of the temple. Through all its childhood, religion has

been its tender and patient foster-mother. In the life of every boy who grows to manhood, there is a period of restiveness and self-will, when the restraints of the home circle become oppressive, and the lessons of wisdom received at a mother's knee, are regarded as among the childish things which in his newly-found manhood he is to put away. And so, in the growth of every science, there is a transition—period from its infancy to its manhood in which in the exuberance of its life, and in the overweening confidence of its yet immatured powers, it arrays itself in antagonism to religion, and affects to treat the Word of God as some quaint fossil of an earlier and more barbarous stage of civilization. But as the boy when he has developed into manhood, finds his reverence for his father, his devotion to his mother and his loyalty to the wise precepts, and wholesome restraints of the domestic circle returning with ever-increasing power upon him, so does all science when it has attained its majority return, as astronomy has already done, to pay the intelligent tribute of its cultured manhood at the shrines of the same temple on whose altars the simpler offerings of its childhood were laid.

It is with peculiar pleasure, young gentlemen of the Eumenean and Philanthropic Societies, that I have found myself by your kind invitation on this rostrum to-day pleading for what I regard as the great bulwark alike of our christian civilization, and our christian faith. All the past history of this institution, all its adjustments in the present, all its auguries for the future, warrant the conviction in which its patrons happily rest that it must ever be one of the strongholds of a pure philosophy and a pure faith—that no assault either upon true science or upon true religion shall ever fail to find within these halls men with the courage to oppose and with the ability to repel. Here may advanced science and Christian faith ever abide together in a unity like that with which the truths about which they are conversant dwell

in the bosom of God. Here may Christian faith ever give to Christian science her highest incentive and her heartiest God-speed. Here may Christian science with the blessing of faith upon her press forward, treading with dauntless footstep along the dim aisles of distant geologic eras, or following the path-way of the light to new discoveries in the remoter heavens, tracing fearlessly every step in the progress of true evolution and real development, that from all her explorations she may gather fresh light to throw upon the pages of Revelation—until thus faith-inspired science and science-instructed faith shall kneel side by side as did our first parents upon the virgin soil of the newly regenerated earth, and reverently join in their first Matin song—

"These are thy glorious works, Parent of Good."